

No. 18 Building a Spiritually Strong Family

Note to the speaker:

Talk with audience participation, interviews, and video. Help the brothers to see that how they preside over their family affects their qualifications to serve. Highlight the value of regular family worship

CHRISTIAN FAMILIES ARE UNDER ATTACK IN THESE CRITICAL TIMES (4 min.)

The Devil wars against those obeying God's commandments (Re 12:17)

He craftily seeks to break up marriages and sever family ties

His objective is to ruin the spirituality of God's dedicated people (1Pe 5:8)

Husbands and fathers, fortify your households to oppose the Devil and draw closer to God by the exemplary way in which you preside over your household (Jas 4:7, 8)

Doing so is a divine requirement for married elders and ministerial servants (1Ti 3:4, 5, 12; w90 9/1 25 ¶8)

By fulfilling such responsibility in a loving way and meeting other Scriptural requirements for ministerial servants, you give evidence of being qualified to handle congregation assignments

BALANCING FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THEOCRATIC ASSIGNMENTS

(15 min.)

When a man marries, he gives up some of the freedom that permitted him to be in "constant devotion to the Lord without distraction" and he must be prepared to shoulder additional responsibilities (1Co 7:35)

He becomes "anxious for the things of the world" and the approval of his wife (1Co 7:33)

Be attentive to your Scriptural duties toward your wife and family (w96 10/15 18 ¶15, 17)

Love and cherish her just as Jesus Christ loves and cherishes the congregation (Eph 5:25, 28, 29)

'Continue dwelling with her according to knowledge, assigning her honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one' (1Pe 3:7)

Recognize her need for your special consideration, attention, and affection

As indicated by Peter, a husband who willfully fails in this regard damages his relationship with Jehovah

Do not neglect or view lightly your Scriptural duties as your wife's spiritual head

Daily pray with her and for her

Regularly take time to read the Bible together

Set aside time every week to study with her

Spend some time with her in field service on a regular basis

While a wife is responsible for working out her own salvation, in some cases spiritual problems could have been avoided if her husband had 'fed and cherished' her

The way a man cares for his wife speaks volumes about his Scriptural qualifications

Acts 20:28 exhorts overseers: "Pay attention to yourselves and to *all* the flock." This would include his wife, if he is married

You can do much to help your wife match the description Paul gave of the wives of elders and ministerial servants (1Ti 3:11)

You are showing good balance in the way you care for your family and congregation responsibilities, and we commend you

[Interviews: (5 min.) Interview two brothers. One should be an exemplary parent who is raising one or more children. The other should be a married, regular pioneer without children. Both brothers

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should be known as loving husbands and as balanced and diligent workers in the congregation. Ask each to answer the following: What are you doing to help keep your family spiritually strong? How does your wife feel about your congregation responsibilities and the time it takes you to care for them? How are you able to maintain balance in caring for your family and your responsibilities in the congregation so that you can spend needed time with your family?]

FAMILY WORSHIP—A KEY TO SUCCESS (15 min.)

Worship as a family has been a regular and integral part of Jehovah's arrangement for his people (De 6:4-7; Eph 6:4)

This aspect of pure worship must not be neglected

A key to your family's success is regularity in conducting family worship

Let's give our attention to fine instruction that is given to family heads in the following video

Pay particular attention to what is necessary for our family to succeed in this wicked world ruled by Satan (1Jo 5:19)

<<**PLAY VIDEO [5 min. 58 sec.]**>>

Questions:

1. What did this couple do to help their family?
2. How does family worship improve family communication?
3. Although your results may not be exactly the same, how will regular family worship help your family?
4. What kind of schedule for family worship have you brothers found to be practical?
5. What have you done to prevent other activities from interfering with your family worship or personal study?
6. How do you keep the study interesting and practical?
7. What can you do to help the congregation understand the importance of personal study and family worship?

STRONG FAMILIES REAP RICH BLESSINGS IN PRAISING JEHOVAH (5 min.)

All elders and ministerial servants find it beneficial to examine regularly how they are measuring up to the qualifications for their respective assignments

Husbands and fathers especially should be concerned with what Paul stated at 1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12

As appointed servants, work hard for the salvation of your household by caring for its spiritual needs

Always be mindful of setting a good example for your family; their exemplary way of life will benefit the entire congregation

Only spiritually strong families can withstand pressures from the Devil and avoid the snares of this wicked world (Ps 140:5; 1Ti 6:9)

Our continued success in praising Jehovah comes not merely by "hearing the Word of God" but by applying it every day (Lu 11:28)

By following Bible principles in presiding over your household, you will bring praise to our heavenly Father, the Originator of the family arrangement (Eph 3:14, 15)